

yale  
sustainable  
food  
project

[yale.edu/sustainablefood](http://yale.edu/sustainablefood)

# WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- Opening assumptions:
  - You're here because you want something to eat
  - Or more precisely, something better to eat
- The good news:
  - Food system reform can yield benefits from almost any angle, and
  - There's a good chance people will get excited about it.
- Two good case studies

# MOTIVATIONS FROM EVERY ANGLE

Health



Taste



# MOTIVATIONS FROM EVERY ANGLE

## Economy



## Environment





# Market Forces

CREATING JOBS THROUGH PUBLIC INVESTMENT  
IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS



Union of Concerned Scientists  
Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

## RAPID GROWTH

Farmers Markets

1970: 340

2010: 7,150

~4,000 CSA Programs

~\$1.7B Gross?

# POWERFUL VAGUENESS

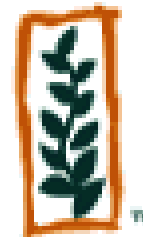
- All stakeholders care deeply about sustainability
- Means something different to all
- Lack of definition
  - Biggest barrier,
  - Or greatest opportunity?
- Constructive ambiguity
- How to keep everybody in the discussion?



Slow Food Santa Cruz  
good. clean. fair.

MONSANTO

*Food • Health • Hope™*







# RE-CONNECTION

- What do we call this?
  - Sustainable Food Systems
  - Alternative Food Networks
  - Alternative Food Systems
  - Civic agriculture
  - Multi-functional agriculture
  - Food with a “face”
  - Food with a “story”
  - Making the invisible visible

# COMMUNITY AS MOTIVATOR



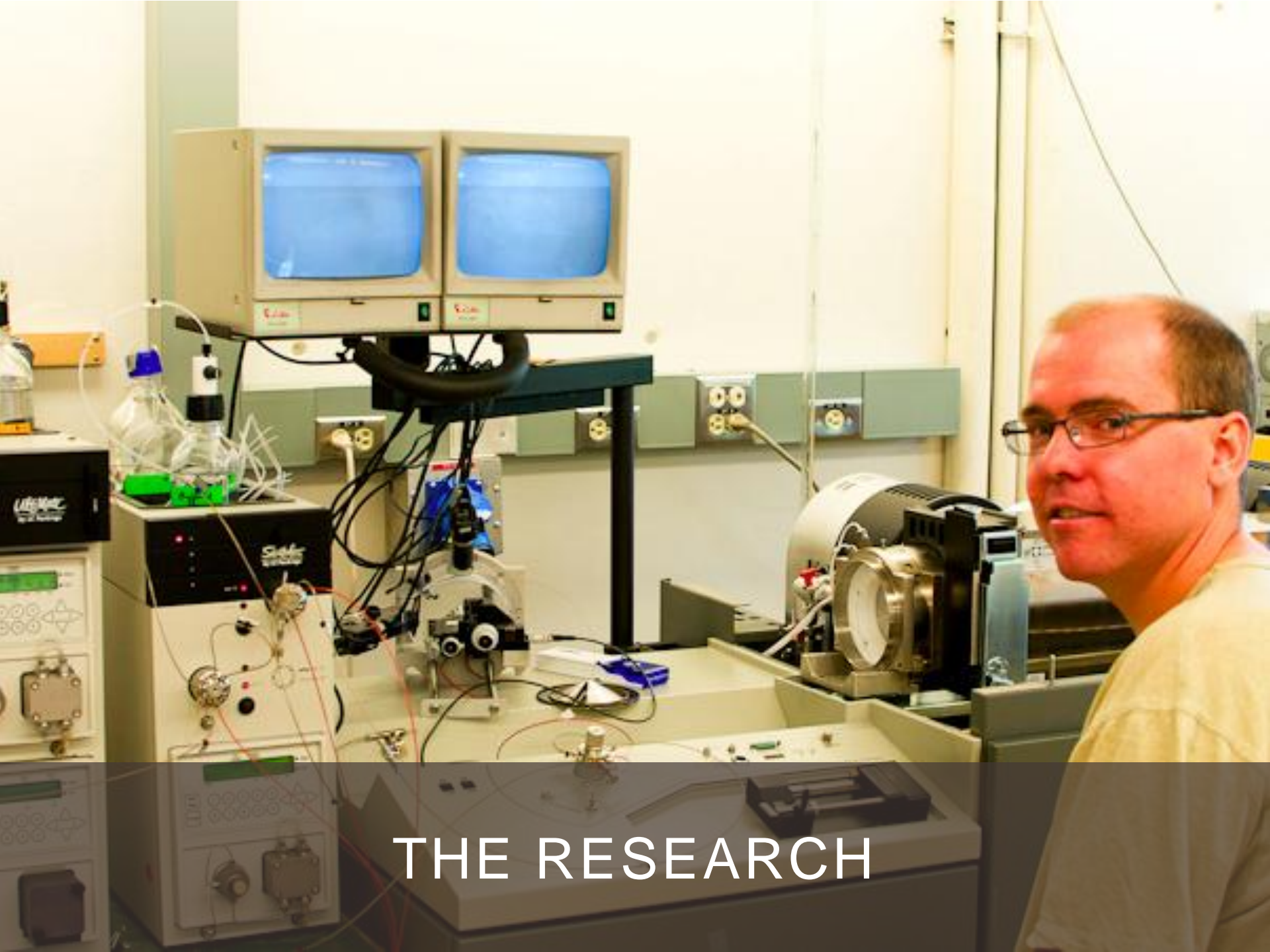


THE BEE AND THE BUTTERNUT





THE ECOSYSTEM SERVICE



THE RESEARCH





THE LEARNING





THE FOOD





SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY?

# WHAT'S IN IT FOR...

- Students?
  - Credits. Much-needed practical experience. Tangible results, hope.
- Staff?
  - Ownership, respect. Jobs.
- Faculty?
  - Research subjects, engaged students.





THE BERKELEY PILOT



INITIATED FROM STUDENT DEMAND...  
WITH HELP





SUSTAINABLE INGREDIENTS





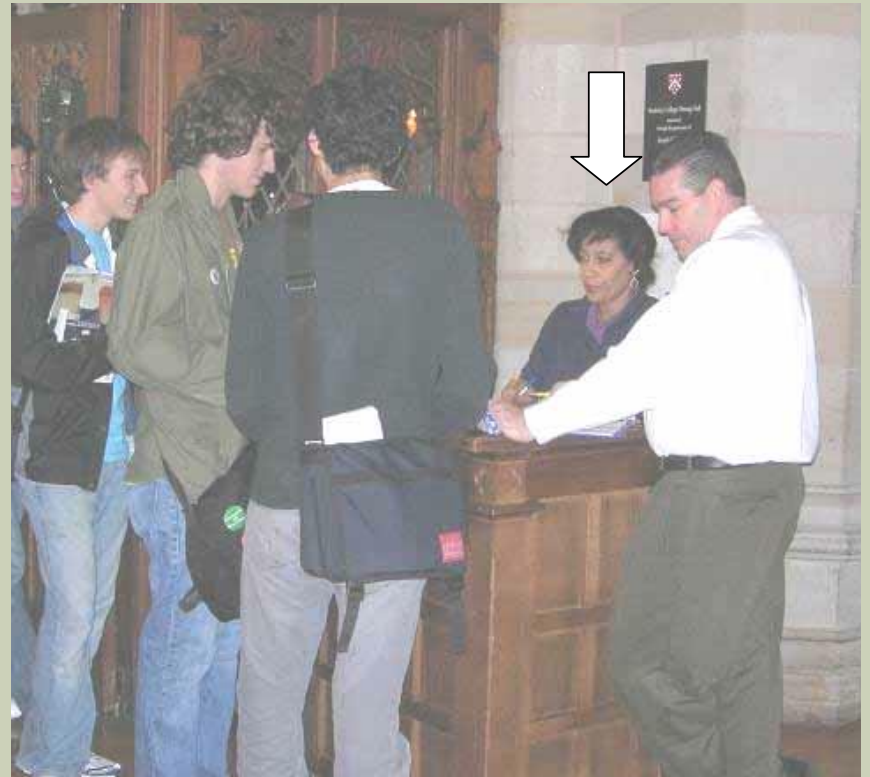
ROLE FOR DINING STAFF

# STUDENT DEMAND!

Lineups



Bouncers





## Dining Hall Where Students Sneak In

ALISON LEIGH COWAN

Published: May 10, 2005

NEW HAVEN, May 9 - The pizza is made from organic flour. The burgers are made from grass-fed lamb and freshly picked mint. The seasonal offerings this spring include chicken brodo with pasta and greens and pork loin with fennel. And don't forget the roasted asparagus.

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Douglas Healey for The New York Times

Idall Becker reads her psychology book while eating an apple after her lunch at the Berkeley College dining hall at Yale University.

This is the menu at the dining hall for students at Berkeley College at Yale University, where the scent of fresh, delicious food - homegrown greens and pasture-raised beef - has been drawing students from around the campus, much as the scent of the black-and-white cat lures the amorous cartoon skunk Pepe Le Pew.

Non-Berkeley students try to sneak in the back door. They try to slip fake identification cards past the Yale employees stationed at the entrance. They don sweatshirts with the Berkeley insignia to make it look as if they belong. Some even scavenge trays of half-eaten food, pretending that they have already been there and only have seconds on their minds.

"Whatever they can get away with," said Catherine Jones, the dining hall's executive chef, sympathetically.

But only the 425 students assigned to Berkeley College, their guests and a few others are allowed into the well-appointed

# MEDIA

New York Times  
Atlantic Magazine

Other universities take note!



## THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE

Food as convener

Empowerment,  
engagement, dialogue...  
connection.

Students, Staff, Faculty

# WHEN IT WORKED

- System-wide change
  - Education: table tents, speakers, student farm
  - Marketing
  - Buy-in
- Value-added parallel
  - Need to put as much time into marketing as into production.
  - The marketing itself becomes much of the added value.

# WHEN IT DIDN'T WORK

- “Tradition is what you resort to when you don’t have the time or the money to do it right.”
  - Message got lost
  - Resorted to old ways.
- Vision out-stripping resources
  - Quality of message can become diluted in up-scaling efforts.





RE-CONNECTING: LEARNING

# RE-CONNECTING: COMMUNITY

## Marketing



## Markets







RE-CONNECTING: MAKE IT TANGIBLE





BUILDING A SPACE





MAKING A PLACE, BUILDING A  
FOUNDATION





## WHERE FROM HERE?

Where were the impacts  
felt?

Healthier?

Wealthier?

Wiser?





## HEALTHIER?

Positive (but not significant) correlations between program participation and health

Overall satisfaction significantly up.



## WEALTHIER?

...Depends on what you include

Unlikely to reduce costs.  
Soft costs likely bigger impact than ingredients.

Big potential for new revenues, though.





WISER?

Absolutely

...but not with food  
alone.

Comprehensive program  
necessary to reap  
benefits.

# THE OPPORTUNITY

- Parallel to “input substitution” in organic agriculture.
- A local food procurement policy alone does not result in a sustainable food system, or the benefits of it.
- As long as these practices are “alternative,” it requires attention to the systemic pieces and lots of marketing / education.
- Unite the fragmented, build good relationships, tell a good story.





QUESTIONS?